

## **Developing the Spirit of Patriotism and Humanism in Children for Peace and Harmony**

**Dr. Domenic Marbaniang**

### **Introduction**

Dictionaries usually define ‘patriotism’ and ‘nationalism’ as synonymous, except sometimes adding a second meaning to ‘nationalism’ as an excessive or jingoist form of patriotism.<sup>1</sup> Both are seen to mean ‘a loyal devotion to one’s own country or nation above the others.’ Yet, though related to each other, their main differences lie in patriotism’s chiefly being an attitude, whereas nationalism is an ideology.<sup>2</sup> Nationalism is the political philosophy of modern nation-states who regard national sovereignty and freedom for national self-realization as the fundamental rights of the nation. The philosophical problems, however, relate to the differences in definitions of a ‘nation’ – as civic, cultural, religious, linguistic, or racial. These differences in definitions create the different types of nationalisms preached and practiced in the world. The difficulty, at grass-root levels, lies in the common man’s inability to discern the political intentions behind such definitions.

The roots of modern humanism, which has become the political ideology of secular states such as India, trace back to the Renaissance (1350 –1600). The Renaissance is considered to be a ‘rebirth’ of classical humanism,<sup>3</sup> especially in its cultural forms of art, literature, and architecture. Modern day humanism may be defined as the theory that views humans as solely responsible for the promotion and development of individuals. It emphasizes a concern for man in relation to the world. The modern notions of human individuality, freedom, dignity, equality, and fundamental rights owe much to the promulgation of secular humanism against the growing tide of evolutionism, a theory based on inhumane assumptions like natural selection and the survival of the fittest. The impact of evolutionism can be seen in the rise of Nazism and its many crimes against humanity. In fact, the concept of ‘crimes against peace and humanity’ is a humanist idea. A study of Western history shows that it was by impact of Christianity that the modern notions of human freedom and dignity took shape.<sup>4</sup> Christian humanists like Erasmus (c. 1466-1536), Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592), Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros (1436-1517), and Sir Thomas More (1478-1535) played important roles in the spread of humanist ideals in the West.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary*, Deluxe 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (USA: Dorset & Baber, 1983).

<sup>2</sup> “Patriotism,” *Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia* (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patriotism>).

<sup>3</sup> Humanism as originally appearing in Classical Greek and Roman culture reflecting the ideal of man as the measure of all things.

<sup>4</sup> Marvin Perry, *Western Civilization*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001), pp.293-296.

Through the writings of John Locke (1632-1704), an English philosopher, humanism had a powerful impact on the framing of the United States Declaration of Independence (July 4, 1776) and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (August 26, 1789). Patriotism that developed during the French Revolution was greatly influenced by humanist ideals of the liberty, equality, and fraternity of all men and a vision of a democratic age of reason.<sup>5</sup>

### **Humanist Patriotism**

In the French Revolution (1789-1799), humanism coalesced with a new spirit of patriotism (a devotion to the fatherland)<sup>6</sup> as the 'French became converts to a secular faith preaching total reverence for the nation.'<sup>7</sup> This spirit of patriotism emphasized the liberty, equality, and fraternity of all men, on the basis of which the Revolution 'upheld the dignity of the individual, demanded respect for the individual, attributed to each person natural rights, and barred the state from denying these rights.'<sup>8</sup> This form of humanist patriotism played a very important role in the development of modern democracy and political secularism. However, the French Revolution failed to take the rational and universal aims of humanist principles to their logical ends.

The tragic part of the French Revolution was the spirit of fear, suspicion, and uncertainty that prevailed throughout, which not only produced the guillotine but also sparked to ignition public violence and mobocratic tendencies. The resort to violence as a political method was the darker part of the Revolution. It not only ended in fear, resentments, and bitterness but also hit back on the promoters of terror. It is not surprising why Maximilién Robespierre (1758-1794) was guillotined by his opponents when the need and enthusiasm for the reign of Terror abated.<sup>9</sup> They felt 'the chill of the guillotine blade on their own necks.'<sup>10</sup> The reign of Terror can only thrive in face of the enemy, whether real or fictionalized. This was well understood by the Nazis who marked the Jews as enemies for political solidarity and by the modern cultural nationalists (or fascists)<sup>11</sup> of India for whom certain minority sections are a 'threat to the nation.' One must remember that it were the forces of total war and frenzied nationalism unleashed by the French Revolution that spawned the world wars and the fascist regimes of the twentieth century.<sup>12</sup> Leaving the threshold of humanism in practice, French patriotism wandered into Machiavellianism, or power politics.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Patriotism was not an invention of the Revolution. It was an important element of Roman culture in which the love of Rome often seemed to supersede the others. However, it was during the Revolution that the focus turned from mere city-states to nation-states.

<sup>6</sup> The French *la patrie* meant 'the fatherland.' The French Revolution voiced the cry 'The citizen is born, lives and dies for the fatherland.' Perry, *Western Civilization*, p. 453.

<sup>7</sup> Perry, *Western Civilization*, p. 457.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p. 457.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 455.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p. 455.

<sup>11</sup> Vishal Mangalwadi, *India: The Grand Experiment* (Surrey: Pippa Rann Books, 1997), pp. 269-301.

<sup>12</sup> Perry, *Western Civilization*, p. 457.

<sup>13</sup> The term 'Machiavellianism' is derived from the name of the Italian thinker, Niccoló Machiavelli (1469-1527) whose work *The Prince*, brought him the reputation of amoral cynicism. Ironically, it was the French

History is witness to the fact that whenever patriotism was not allied with humanism, it chose some other ally to its own destruction. In such cases, a form of nationalism (defined as racial, cultural, or religious) takes on the reins to destroy the importance of the individual in view of the interests of the state. For instance, it may choose a religious ideal to develop into a religious form of nationalism, or it may choose a racial ideal to develop into a racial form of nationalism. In any of such situation, the liberty and rights of the individual become threatened. Therefore, it may be said that, in the modern scheme of things, humanism embodying the notions of liberty, equality, and fraternity of all men, is the best ally of patriotism.

Humanism found its way into India through the practical efforts of Christian missionaries and the spread of Western education. According to B. R. Ambedkar (1891-1956), Hinduism could never have made a humanist contribution to India.

Historically speaking, service to humanity is quite foreign to Hinduism and to Hindus. The Hindu religion consists primarily of rituals and observances. It is a religion of temples. Love of man has no place in it. And without love of man how can service of man be inspired? This is well reflected in the purposes and objects for which Hindu charities are given. Very few people, even in India, know the extent to which caste determines the scope and objects of charities provided by the Hindus.<sup>14</sup>

The extent of the missionary work didn't just cover charities but also social transformation of the people. For instance, it was through the efforts of the Baptist missionary William Carey that a ban was finally imposed on *sati*.<sup>15</sup>

English education also played an important role in the spread of humanism in India. As national consciousness began to emerge in reaction to British rule, the spirit of patriotism in India blended with the ideology of humanism and found expression through the work and writings of people like Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Rabindranath Tagore, Motilal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and Mahatma Gandhi.<sup>16</sup> It was under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi that the principles of *Sarvodaya* (welfare of all) and *Satyagraha* (holding on to truth in love) combined with the doctrine of *ahimsa* (non-violence) to mobilize incredible number of masses in a peaceful struggle for independence. Gandhi's applied humanist patriotism became a model for many other struggles for freedom and human rights outside India. However, it is the Indians who reserve the glory of being a people in whom humanism and patriotism finally converged to stall the hatred of violent history and extricate the nation from it.

## **Patriotism and Humanism Vs Nationalism in Child Education**

---

who coined the term 'Machiavellianism' out of hatred for all things Italian. (*Encyclopedia Britannica Deluxe CD-Rom Edition 2005*).

<sup>14</sup> D. C. Ahir (ed.), *Dr. Ambedkar on Christianity in India* (New Delhi: Blumoon Books, 1995), p. 34.

<sup>15</sup> Lord William Bentick, aided by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, declared the practice of *sati* as illegal and punishable as 'culpable homicide' in 1829. For information on the role of Carey in Indian social reformation, please refer to Ruth and Vishal Mangalwadi, *William Carey and the Regeneration of India* (Landour, Mussoorie: Nivedit Good Books Distributors Pvt. Ltd., Ivy Cottage, 1997).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. S. Radhakrishnan, *Living With a Purpose* (Delhi: Orient Paperbacks, 2004), pp. 56-65, 69-90.

The history of the freedom struggle had a tremendous impact on the development of national consciousness in India. Humanist patriotism has been a theme of many movies, songs, poems, essays, and paintings in India. The governmental promotion of patriotism through national symbols, media, sports, and education has played an important role in the creating within the citizens an awareness of their national identity. The vibrancy of children during any of the national festivals indicates their spirit of national pride.

In a recent poll of students in the age group of 8-12,<sup>17</sup> 72% told that they were proud of being Indians, 78% considered India as greater than any other nation, 81% thought India needed a lot of improvement, and 19% wished they were American (or at least in America) rather than Indian. In one school, run by Catholics, 100% voted in favor of India, expressing pride for their Indianness, yet seeing the need for its improvement. The results of the poll reflect the positive attitude of many Indian children towards the nation. The greater number of response to the third question, *viz.* whether India needed a lot of improvement, shows these children's perceptive balance of patriotism between fact and feeling. However, the results also tell us that there are children in India who are either indifferent to their national identity or disparaged by it; which also is a reminder of the need for guided programmes to help children develop a positive attitude towards their country. It is also very important to develop in children the understanding of not only the meaning of true humanist patriotism, but also of the various anti-humanist nationalist movements that seek to disrupt the social harmony of India.

As stated earlier, the governmental promotion of humanism and patriotism through media and education is having its effects. However, a glance at the past few years will immediately reveal the serious, sometimes clandestine and sometimes blatant, progress of anti-humanist forces in India that not only work in accordance to the principles of their misdirected patriotism (in support of some religious or cultural nationalism), but also seek to bring amendments in our Constitution to limit the freedom and rights of minorities. The Sangh Parivar, as well known by many, is an active promoter of religious nationalism, religious racism, and religious culturalism in India.<sup>18</sup> Drawing an appraisal of the BJP rule in India earlier, Asghar Ali Engineer notes:

The BJP has been in power since 1999. There was not a single year under it that did not witness communal violence. According to our research based on news paper reports and other sources number of riots took place every year, in the year 1999, 52 riots took place in which 43 people were killed and 248 injured. In the year 2000, 24 riots occurred in which 91 people were killed and 165 injured. In the year 2001, 27 riots erupted in which 56 were killed and 158 injured. In the year 2002, 28 communal riots were recorded (including Gujarat) in which 1173 persons lost their lives and 2272 were injured (unofficially in Gujarat alone more than 2000 people were killed according to private counts). And in the year 2003, 67 riots took place in which 58 people were killed and 611 were injured.<sup>19</sup>

The spread of communal violence not only creates the spirit of fear, suspicion, and

---

<sup>17</sup> Open polls conducted in three schools of Hoshangabad and Anuppur districts of Madhya Pradesh, November, 2007.

<sup>18</sup> R. D. S. Marbaniang, "Perspectives on Indian Secularism" ([www.geocities.com/rdsmarb](http://www.geocities.com/rdsmarb)), pp. 10-19.

<sup>19</sup> Asghar Ali Engineer, "India Shining" (<http://www.islamicvoice.com/march.2004/view.htm>).

resentment in the country but also shatters the unity and the solidarity of the nation. Obviously, the Sangh confuses the notion of ‘fatherland’ with its confused notions of ‘nation’. For, according to it, India could only be sacred to the Hindus as their ‘motherland’; the Christians belong to Palestine and the Muslims belong to Arabia.<sup>20</sup> Thus, national fervor is judged with respect to religious fidelity and loyalty. There are other arguments based on racial originality, the exclusivist and intolerant theologies of Islam and Christianity, the propagation of terror and forced conversions, and Constitutional injustice with regard to religious laws. All of such arguments, it may be agreed, have some element of truth;<sup>21</sup> however, secluded instances cannot be extrapolated to make generalizations about a community. For in that case, the teeming of Indian prisons with “Hindu” criminals could be a case to insist that all Hindus are criminals! The fallacy of insufficient data can be readily observed here. Obviously, then, it is vital for modern educational institutions to expose such irrational and anti-humanist mechanisms, while at the same time strive to develop the spirit of true patriotism and humanism for national solidarity, peace, and harmony.

The promotion of humanist patriotism is important to preserve the true spirit of religion. According to S. Radhakrishnan, religion should be liberal and universal extending to all human classes and contexts; however, nationalism contravenes this spirit.<sup>22</sup> In a pluralistic context like India, humanism serves as a common platform for social interactions among the people. Religious nationalism, on the other hand, brings schisms in society and converts religion into an instrument against the people of the nation; thus causing self-destruction. However, when religion respects the individuality, dignity, equality, and fundamental rights of man, it contributes towards peace and harmony in the world. It is, therefore, important for parents, religious leaders, and educators to instill first the spirit of humanism in children before any religious education is given.

There is, of course, a negative aspect of Western humanism as an ideology that has no place for the supernatural or the divine. That, however, is not a major concern in India. This is obvious from the fact that though atheistic evolutionism has been taught since years in the Indian schools, it has not been able to produce whole scale atheists by any means. This tells us that there are other factors than just text-books that play a major role in the development of a child’s attitude towards the world. As manifest from the writings of Tagore, humanism in India combines with the deeper religious spirit of the people. Of course, the extent of religious humanism differs from urban life to rural life. While individualism is becoming an increasing feature of the former, the evils of caste and sexual discrimination still beset the latter. It is, therefore, pivotal for educators to not just introduce children to humanism but introduce it in a way to preserve both the religious and the social spirit. Including the writings of people like Tagore and Gandhi, as well as parts of different religious scriptures that promote humanism, in the syllabi can be helpful

<sup>20</sup> Amulya Ganguli, “Not So Strange Bedfellows,” *Hindustan Times*, Bhopal, August 6, 2004, p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> Except arguments like the one based on racial originality and historical belongedness to the land. The Indo-European descent of Aryans is well known from history books. Few years back, eighteen scientists from India and US, after research on genetic signatures of Indians and Europeans, concluded that “the upper castes are genetically closer to Europeans and the lower castes to Asians.” Supriya Bezbaruah with Samrat Choudhury, “White India,” *India Today*, July 10, 2001, pp. 64-69.

<sup>22</sup> Dr. Radhakrishnan, *Satya Ki Khoj* (Hindi Version of *Recovery of Faith*, Delhi: Rajpal, 1996), p. 41.

in this regard.

Christians may sometimes feel that humanism is antithetical to Christianity and, therefore, must not be advocated. However, as stated earlier, it was by impact of Christianity that the present form of humanism took shape. According to Vishal Mangalwadi, the Christian reformers, who struggled to humanize politics, were successful where the Greeks had failed because of their reliance on the biblical worldview that 'enabled them to articulate a theology of freedom that touched the hearts of the masses, armed them with the commitment of religious martyrs, and mobilized them in a campaign for freedom.'<sup>23</sup> One may remember that it was Ruskin's<sup>24</sup> *Unto This Last* and Christ's Sermon on the Mount that had a powerful influence on Gandhi's humanistic ideas.<sup>25</sup> Obviously, it is not humanism itself but the atheistic promotion of humanism that is both anti-Christian and also detrimental to society. In fact, in modern times, atheistic existentialists emphasized the freedom of man against the deterministic and naturalistic view of scientific atheism in general. However, existentialism, which saw no meaning in human existence apart from the meaning one creates for oneself, could not be an argument for human liberty, equality, dignity, and fraternity. Human worth cannot be self-created; it must be a given; it is transcendental.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, Christians can rest assured that the true foundations of humanism lie in God's revelation of human values and responsibility in the Holy Scriptures.

### **Biblical Principles for Developing the Spirit of Patriotism and Humanism in Children**

While the basis of humanism is the account of creation, the theme of patriotism is one that develops throughout the Bible. The creation of man (male and female) in the image of God, his appointment over all creation, and God's concern for man above all creation are biblical facts that show the equality, fraternity, and dignity of man. Homicide is not condemned, in the Bible, for sociological reasons; it is condemned for theological reasons. 'Whoso sheddeth man's blood,' God stipulated, 'by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.'<sup>27</sup> The Bible expounds the principle of love as it unravels itself through the Prophets to the New Testament. 'Love your neighbour as yourself,' the Bible says, demonstrating the fraternity of all men, Jew and gentile alike.

God's covenant with the children of Israel became the foundation for Israelite patriotism. The people were not only separated unto God from all other people,<sup>28</sup> but were also given

---

<sup>23</sup> Vishal Mangalwadi, *India: The Grand Experiment*, p. 52

<sup>24</sup> John Ruskin (1819-1900), a deeply religious man influenced by the Evangelical Revival and art of the Victorian age, had a powerful impact on modern thought of art, ecology, and social ethics.

<sup>25</sup> M. K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1927), pp. 63-64, 274-275.

<sup>26</sup> 'The sense of the world must lie outside the world,' said Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951). John Hick (ed.), *Classical and Contemporary Readings in the Philosophy of Religion*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), p. 333

<sup>27</sup> Genesis 9: 6.

<sup>28</sup> Exodus 19: 4-6; Leviticus 20: 24.

the land of Palestine for an everlasting possession.<sup>29</sup> Basically, however, the people's relationship with God was more important than their relationship with the land.<sup>30</sup> The people and the land were connected to God in a way that when the people disobeyed God, the land was polluted, bringing divine wrath on the people;<sup>31</sup> and when the chastisement for their sins did fall leading to the Babylonian captivity in 586 B.C., the love of the land developed in a different way.<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, the vision of a future Messianic kingdom became the theme of post-exilic prophecy. The Messiah's kingdom would not just be limited to Palestine; it would cover the whole earth.<sup>33</sup> Thenceforth, the Biblical vision of kingdom transcended the boundaries of nations. Finally, in the New Testament, this vision shifts from a focus on any earthly land to the hope of Christ's second coming and establishment of the kingdom of God on the earth. This final vision, however, doesn't underestimate the importance of modern nation-states. Modern politics do have their role to play in the historical movement towards God's kingdom. The Bible does speak of loyalty to one's state. However, there are few Biblical principles that one must bear in mind when considering one's relation to the state.

## **1. Understanding Relationships and Obligations**

To the Early Church, allegiance to Caesar or Christ had become an important question. We know that the Church stood faithful to Christ. Of course, Caesar did have his rights.<sup>34</sup> But, his rights ended where God's began. They were never meant to infringe or flout the rights of God. Therefore, when Caesar demanded religious allegiance to himself, the Christians disobeyed. There is a way in which the Christian relates to his state by rendering to the state what properly belongs to it and rendering to God what absolutely belongs to Him. Understanding one's obligations in different relationships is important. As a parent has certain obligations to his/her child, so the child does have certain obligations to his parent.<sup>35</sup> As a husband has certain obligations to his wife, so the wife also has certain obligations to her husband.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, mutual obligations exist between master and servant, disciple and teacher, the state and the citizen.<sup>37</sup> Unfaithfulness with regard to any of these relationships is unacceptable before God. However, the hierarchy of relations also needs to be understood. The Early Christians understood the priority of God and God's kingdom in their lives and never allowed the worldly government to encroach on their loyalty to God.

## **2. Culturization**

A healthy development of relationships is greatly dependent on the impact of culture on the person. Culturization refers to the process of constructing, reforming, or developing

---

<sup>29</sup> Genesis 17: 8; 48: 4.

<sup>30</sup> Deuteronomy 29: 24-26.

<sup>31</sup> Jeremiah 3: 2, 3.

<sup>32</sup> Psalm 137.

<sup>33</sup> Daniel 2: 35; Habakkuk 2: 14.

<sup>34</sup> Matthew 22: 19-21, Romans 13: 7.

<sup>35</sup> Ephesians 6: 1-4.

<sup>36</sup> Ephesians 5: 21-23.

<sup>37</sup> Ephesians 6: 5-9; 1 Timothy 5: 17; Romans 13: 1-7

any culture to suit the needs of the present and future with the object that the subjects of the culture would be shaped after the cultural paradigm. Mosaic Law is an important example of such culturization. It demonstrates not just the retention of the good elements of an older culture but also the renewal and modification of it in order that the people of that culture might be strong. Culturization is a difficult process. It is sometimes very revolutionary. In the Indian context, a removal of caste feelings promoted by both culture and certain governmental laws is important for proper enculturation of children with ideas of fraternity, equality, and justice.

Symbols are another important part of any culture. The Jewish feasts, festivals, and rituals had great symbolic importance. They were visible signs of the ideas and concepts having historical, spiritual, political, and theological significance. The feast of the Passover, for instance, symbolized Israel's historical deliverance, spiritual lineage, political freedom, and theological significance in God's plan. Of course, in the modern situation, theological or spiritual significance may not be attached to symbols such as national flags or festivals. However, these symbols are important instruments for the development of historical, cultural, social, and political consciousness among the citizens. Therefore, culturization must always take into consideration the power of symbols.

### **3. General Awareness and Active Participation**

A general awareness of the nation, its present status and future direction, is important for developing in the citizen a feeling of being an active part of the nation. Democracy is greatly handicapped when citizens are ignorant of their nation, are asleep or only half-awake. The children of Issachar were praised for having an 'understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.'<sup>38</sup> In the absence of sufficient data, both diagnosis and decision-making suffer since the inductive process is greatly handicapped. In order for the citizens to be wise and active, an awareness of the social, physical, political, economical, and cultural status and direction of the nation must be present.

In addition to promoting general awareness, there must be schemes to encourage active involvement at both the local and national level. The exercise of voting power is one example of such involvement. Of course, the present models of rural administration do involve active and cooperative participation of the people. However, there must also be schemes to extend local cooperation to a national level. One can see, for instance, that sports, like cricket and hockey, play an important role in the development of national consciousness and national integrity among the people. Other important tools to aid such purposes are media and education. Freedom of press helps reveal the real picture of the country. However, there is also need of liberal, yet discreet, censorship so that dangerous seeds of national disintegration are expunged.<sup>39</sup>

### **4. Belief in God**

According to Plato, a right perspective about God is crucial to the strengthening of the

---

<sup>38</sup> I Chronicles 12: 32.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Plato, *The Republic and Other Works* (Trans. B. Jowett, New York: Anchor Books, 1989), pp. 71-80



nation. A false and fictional or mythological doctrine of God is 'suicidal, ruinous, impious.'<sup>40</sup> The Bible asserts that righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to any people.<sup>41</sup> Modern criminologists have found that the increase in crime is often proportional to the increase in a disbelief in God or religion. To the Israelites, the words of the Mosaic Covenant distinguished them from every other nation under the sun and gave them a peculiar identity in this world.<sup>42</sup> Of course, in a secular state such as India religion cannot be officially promoted. Similarly, the government must not also try to discourage religious developments in line with the welfare of the nation.

It is seen that one's concept of God and ultimate reality has a significant effect on both his way of thinking and way of living. The kind of deity that one believes in also influences one's lifestyle.<sup>43</sup> Theologically speaking, belief in God takes care of the problem of sin as sin becomes a problem directed not just against men but against God Himself. Thus, as Plato noted, false and irrational ideas of God<sup>44</sup> should not be peddled. This means that the Church should move forward to publish the doctrine of the true God so that sin will lose its hold on society, and the nation will become much stronger before God. Rousseau was right when he called Plato's *Republic* a major treatise on child education for it attempts to provide a program for training children to be responsible citizens of the state. Plato understood that the development of piety in children during their foundational years is crucial for building in them the spirit of justice and truth in order that they become responsible citizens of the Republic. He, as been said earlier, also saw that certain ideas about God promoted by popular religion are not only irrational but also detrimental to the mind of children. The Bible emphasizes the importance of teaching children the fear of the Lord<sup>45</sup> which is considered to be the beginning of wisdom.<sup>46</sup> It is obvious that a belief in a Supreme Judge and Ruler above the earthly judges and rulers is a greater impulse for righteous living than mere belief in men or human laws. Therefore, it may be said that belief in God is an important precursor of responsible living within a state or nation.

Belief in God, however, can neither be imposed nor discouraged by a secular state such as India. In addition, the pluralistic setting of our nation is adverse towards exclusivist theological ideas. However, one may be reminded of the importance of reason in the Indian philosophical mind; the Indian Renaissance (18<sup>th</sup> C.) is a good example of it. Ultimately, it is the belief in a just and good God that is very important. And this must become an important concern of missions in India.

## Conclusion

---

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, p. 66.

<sup>41</sup> Proverbs 14: 34.

<sup>42</sup> Deuteronomy 4: 6-9.

<sup>43</sup> Psalm 115: 8.

<sup>44</sup> One irrational idea being peddled by modern fundamentalists in India is the concept of tribal gods, where gods are restricted to territories and people groups. Thus, India is seen as the land of Rama; Arabia, as the land of Muslims; and Palestine, as the land of Jews and Christians. But God cannot be supreme if He's geographically limited.

<sup>45</sup> Psalm 34: 11.

<sup>46</sup> Proverbs 1: 7.

Humanism and patriotism have been an important part of the Indian subcontinent for the past six decades. However, these ideas have also been greatly misinterpreted and misrepresented in the past years. With the rise of atheistic tendencies in the past century, modern humanism has come to be identified with a naturalistic outlook of the world that has man at its center. But, as Solomon saw, human existence is confused without God. It is relationship with God that infuses life with meaning and purpose. Consequently, it is within the perspective of the Biblical doctrine of Creation that humanism can find real sustenance.<sup>47</sup> Obviously, in a setting such as India, humanism must assume a secular identity. However, there are also anti-secular elements that try to demote humanist values. Children must, especially, be guarded from such destructive forces. Yet, secular humanism must also be balanced with a rational religious attitude that promotes equality, fraternity, justice, and liberty together with a human dignity that is accredited by God and, therefore, views human life as sacred.

Patriotism must follow humanism without extolling the nation above fellowmen. It is the love of one's neighbour that comes before the love of the nation. Love and loyalty begin microscopically. One may talk of being devoted to the whole nation; however, if he has no love for his neighbour, such talk is only hypocritical. Therefore, the real spirit of patriotism must be seen as compassionate, loving, and helpful to people around. Patriotism must also combat the enemy forces that promote inequality, hatred, corruption, and disloyalty among the people of the country. As has been seen, however, this requires a proper understanding of one's relationship with self, family, nation, and God. One also needs to know in order to act, and so being updated on the current affairs of the nation is pivotal. But more importantly, one must look at one's culture more seriously and educators may find ways to infuse culture with elements that promote humanism and patriotism among children. This also means eliminating anti-humanistic or anti-patriotic elements from culture.

With all of that in action, humanism and patriotism will certainly serve to bring peace and harmony to the nation.

## Bibliography

- Ahir, D.C. (ed.). *Ambedkar on Christianity in India*, New Delhi: Blumoon Books,  
 Augustine. *The City of God*, tr. Marcus Dods, New York: The Modern Library, 1950.  
 Basak, Kakoli. *Rabindranath Tagore A Humanist*. New Delhi: Classical Publishing  
 Company, 1991.  
 Brown, Colin. *Christianity and Western Thought* vol. 1, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1990.

---

<sup>47</sup> The Biblical view of Creation not only frees man from mythical animism but also from slavery to nature and provides him 'an absolute precondition for the development of natural science.' Cf. Harvey Cox, *The Secular City*, rev. edn. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1966), pp. 19-21.

- Cossman, Brenda & Kapur, Ratna. *Secularism's Last Sigh*, n.p: Oxford University Press, n.d.
- Cox, Harvey. *The Secular City*, New York: Macmillan Pub. Co. Inc., 1975.
- Dubey, Daya Shankar & Tandon, Rajesh. *Constitutional History of India*, Allahabad: Allahabad Law Agency, n.d.
- Farquhar, J.N. *Modern Religious Movements in India*, London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1924.
- Gandhi, M.K. *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1927.
- Hillerbrand, Hans (ed). *The Reformation*, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972
- Jeyaraj, Jesudason Baskar. *Christian Ministry*. Bangalore: Theological Book Trust, 2002.
- Kishwar, Madhu. *Religion at the Service of Nationalism: An Analysis of Sangh Parivar Politics*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Madan, T.N. *Modern Myths, Locked Minds*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Mahajan, V.D. *Modern Indian History*, New Delhi: S. Chand & Co. Ltd., 2004, 17<sup>th</sup> edn.
- Mangalwadi, Ruth and Vishal. *William Carey and the Regeneration of India*, Landour, Mussoorie: Nivedit Good Books Distributors Pvt. Ltd., Ivy
- Mangalwadi, Vishal. *India: The Grand Experiment*, Surrey: Pippa Rann Books, 1997.
- Marbaniang, R. Domenic S. "Perspectives on Indian Secularism," [www.geocities.com/rdsmarb/indiansecularism.pdf](http://www.geocities.com/rdsmarb/indiansecularism.pdf)
- Matthew, C.V. *The Saffron Mission*, New Delhi: ISPCK, 1999.
- Radhakrishnan, S. *Living with a Purpose*, Delhi: Orient Paperbacks, 2004.
- Radhakrishnan, S. *Recovery of Faith*. New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 1994.
- Raj, Ebe Sunder. *The Confusion Called Conversion*, New Delhi: TRACI Publications, 1998, rev. edn.
- Thompson, Bard. *Humanists and Reformers*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1981.
- Perry, Marvin. *Western Civilization*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001, 4<sup>th</sup> edn.
- Zacharias, Ravi. *Deliver Us From Evil*, USA: Wpublishing Group, 1997.